

[15 December, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

(c) During the last few years, the following measures have been taken for providing Railway facilities for the State of Uttaranchal and Himachal:

Uttaranchal

*Introduction*

- a. 2055/2056 New Delhi-Dehradun Jan Shatabdi Express (6 days a week).
- b. 4319/4320 Dehradun-Kathgodam Express *w.e.f.* 09.01.2001.
- c. 2053/2054 Haridwar-Amaritsar Jan Shatabdi (6 days a week) *w.e.f.* 27.10.2006.
- d. 2687/2688 Chennai-Dehradun *w.e.f.* 30.10.2003.

*Extension*

- a. 8477/8478 Puri-Haridwar Utkal Express (daily) *w.e.f.* 01.07.2005.
- b. 9105/9106 Ahmedabad-Haridwar (daily) *w.e.f.* 01.07.2006.

*Increase in Frequency*

- a. 4319/4320 Dehradun-Kathgodam Express from tri-weekly to daily *w.e.f.* 11.11.2006.

Himachal

*Introduction*

- a. 4035/4036 Delhi-Pathankot Dhauladhar Express (tri-weekly) *w.e.f.* 25.12.2002, providing connection to Narrow Gauge line to Himachal.

**Outsourcing of Railway tickets**

2688 SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have granted a licence to the Travel Agents Association of India;

(b) the details of this permission;

(c) the way Railways would make it easier for the public to buy tickets;

- (d) whether more agents would be appointed in rural areas; and
- (e) the steps proposed to hasten the process of outsourcing sale of railway tickets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Instructions have been issued to permit approved Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) members to book e-tickets.

(c) With a view to ensure easy availability of tickets, efforts are on to proliferate e-ticketing by authorising outside agencies to book e-tickets.

(d) Agents will be appointed in all areas including rural areas depending upon demand pattern.

(e) Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is selling e-tickets through SIFY Cyber Cafes, E-Seva of Andhra Pradesh Government, distributors of ITZ Cash Cards/Done Cash Cards outlets and Punjab State Government run Kiosks. It is a continuous process.

#### **Pending projects of West Bengal**

2689. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of railway projects pending in respect of West Bengal Government, project-wise;
- (b) the reasons for delay in the implementation of these projects;
- (c) whether Government are considering the proposal for introduction of inter-city trains to/from various important cities of West Bengal; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The details of ongoing projects falling fully/partly in West Bengal along with anticipated cost and their status are as under:—